

REMARKS

Claims 37-81 are pending in the present application, and were rejected in the Final Office Action dated December 28, 2004. The rejection of these claims is respectfully traversed. With this Amendment, claims 37, 52 and 67 have been amended.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 37-40, 42-48, 52-55, 57-63, 67-70, and 72-78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kothuri et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,470,344) in view of *Riddle* (U.S. Patent No. 4,466,060).

Claims 41, 56 and 71 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kothuri et al.* in view of *Riddle*, as applied to claims 37-40, 42-48, 52-55, 57-63, 67-70, and 72-78, and further in view of *Blais et al.* (U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2002/0178437).

Claims 49-50, 64-65, and 79-80 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kothuri et al.* in view of *Riddle*, as applied to claims 37-40, 42-48, 52-55, 57-63, 67-70, and 72-78, and further in view of *Hsing et al.* (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0023113).

Claims 51, 66 and 81 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kothuri et al.* in view of *Riddle*, as applied to claims 37-40, 42-48, 52-55, 57-63, 67-70, and 72-78, and further in view of *Geil* (U.S. Patent No. 3,662,400).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections at least because the cited references do not teach or suggest “determining if a node is present in only one tree by comparing two or more of the hierarchical trees” as recited, for example, in amended claim 37. The Examiner admits that

Kothuri et al. does not teach “determining if a node is present in only one tree,” and Applicants agree. Applicant respectfully submit that *Riddle* does not teach or suggest “determining if a node is present in only one tree by comparing two or more of the hierarchical trees.”

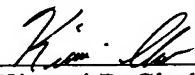
The other cited references *Blais et al.*, *Hsing et al.*, and *Geil* also do not teach or suggest this limitation. As a result, none of the cited references teach or suggest the limitations of claim 37. Applicants submit that claim 37 is patentable for at least the above-mentioned reasons. Claims 38-51 depend from claim 37, and are therefore patentable for at least the same reasons. Claims 52 and 67 are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 37. Furthermore, claims 53-66 and 68-81 depend on claims 52 and 67 respectively and are therefore patentable at least for the same reasons.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing comments, Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendment places the above-referenced application in condition for allowance, and thus, a swift allowance is respectfully requested so that the application may swiftly pass to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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